


# Through the Great Wall into North China





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# Wellesley in North China



"Not to be ministered unto but to minister."

## THAT YOU MAY KNOW.

Miss Frances Taft, graduate of Wellesley, 1909. She was secretary of the Student Volunteer Movement, 1909-1910.

Miss Taft sailed for China February 19, 1911, arriving March 12th in Shanghai.

Her support was guaranteed by several groups of Wellesley friends.

She was appointed to North China and resided for language study at Peking. Later, because of the revolution, she took up residence in Tientsin.

At Tientsin Miss Taft gave half time to Association work from September, 1912, to March, 1913, working especially with the students in a high class girls' school.

In March, 1913, she was called to Shanghai as assistant general secretary.

In July, 1913, she was appointed general secretary for Shanghai.

In 1912, the Wellesley Alumnæ Association officially assumed her support.

This support was \$1,100 a year, which includes salary and the expense of house rent, physician and teacher. In addition they assumed \$300 yearly for the extension of the National work in China.

In February, 1914, Miss Taft resigned her position in Shanghai Association to return to America.

# THROUGH THE GREAT WALL INTO NORTH CHINA.

## Foreword.

The great wall of China which climbs from hilltop to hilltop, with audacious disregard of trend and hindrance, still bounds the territory of North China. From its now crumbling watch-towers one is thrilled by the tide of modern enterprise which is being carried through the widened gateways and through the breaches of its foundations by rails of steel and taut stretched wires. A smoke on the horizon locates the vast mines whose development marks the end of clean air in the cities. The light that glows out on a misty night above ancient Peking betrays the passing of the tallow candle. Great buildings rise above the level of the housetops, indicating a growing ambition and an endeavor to put China among the foremost nations of the world. The modern cruiser, replacing a fleet of junks, trails a cloud of smoky civilization above the waters that are now the pathway of the western nations. Peace, as the world knows peace, is more nearly accomplished in China to-day than was thought possible in her hour of national re-birth. Those who are willing to listen to the missionary message and to the Word of God have multiplied by millions during the past two years. It is an hour of receptivity—inasmuch as we are servants of a living faith have we opportunity to move China to-day. A recent meeting held by Dr. Mott and Mr. Eddy of North China evidenced this. In Peking, followed one meeting attended by more than three hundred women, ninety-seven signed on for Bible study. In Tientsin scores of young women from the government schools joined Bible classes following the addresses. The women who hear the message are a great host. Few there are to guide them in their new learning. Of the message of Chris-

tianity to mothers, to home-makers, to women in industry, to women in the rural places, little has as yet been said.

### **Language.**

Work of the Association in China divides itself territorially along lines of language. Mandarin is spoken by three hundred millions of the Chinese people, but there are of Mandarin almost as many dialects as there are provinces. The variations are usually classified as Northern and Southern Mandarin, the North Mandarin being modeled theoretically after that spoken in Peking, so that in speaking of "North China" we mean that section of China where the Pekinese Mandarin prevails. In this region are the cities of Peking, Tientsin, Tungchow and Pao-tung-fu. Practically all the personal contact with the women of North China must be obtained through the medium of their own dialect. The conservatism of the north has prevented even a limited use of English among the people.

## **PEKING.**

### **A Near View.**

To see Peking from the city wall is to look out over a forest of trees, with gleaming yellow roofs of the old palaces, green tiled house tops of deposed princes, and the blue domes of memorial temples. Vast granaries that once held the imperial tribute are now crumbling to dust. Around what was once the old Imperial City runs a crimson wall with yellow tiled top, called the "great red wall" by Chinese poets. Beyond this wall is the outer wall of the "Tartar city" and alongside the "Tartar city" what is known as the "Chinese city." The extent of the outer walls is nineteen miles. On the sites of old palaces and

wrecked temples are being constructed the modern office buildings with no hint of mystery. They are typical of the material renaissance which China is destined to experience. The utilitarian stare of these buildings is bent on broad boulevards that erstwhile



One of Thousands of Alleys.

were glittering with cavalcades of caparisoned horsemen. Within these edifices are transacted in one day measures which in former times of obstructive legislation were years in coming to fruition.

### **Women's Education.**

The type of women's education, as undertaken by the national government, is as yet experimental. Kaleidoscopic change in administration has created many directors of education; first progressive, then conservative, then reactionary. A man, educated in the United States, was succeeded by a gentleman trained in the old system of education, he in turn was superceded by a man whose only claim as director of education was that he had long been an official. Nev-

ertheless there is working out through experiment and experience a policy that will eventually provide education for all Chinese girls. It is very difficult to secure women who will leave the great centers to go into smaller cities or the country as teachers.

### **Influence of Peking.**

#### **Socially.**

With all the schools that are now begun in Peking it is evident that it will become one of the most important educational centers of China. The influence of Peking is felt in the remotest hamlet in the most distant province. A few words spoken in Pekinese bring a recognition that no other dialect invites. Plans and customs may and do originate in other cities of the republic, but when Peking sets its stamp upon a custom it becomes an established usage. Moreover, this city is the center of the yet sporadic woman's movement, of literary clubs and of social circles. During the perils of the revolution the Chinese women in connection with the missionaries had an organization effected whereby families and individuals might be protected in case of danger. Clubs were organized for the preparation of Red Cross materials for nurses. For some years the missions have had a so-called university extension work in which lectures on public topics have been given by prominent Chinese women. In short, there is no city in China where the women are more ripe for organized effort among themselves than are the women in Peking.

It cannot be said of North China as of other cities in the Republic that there are no unmarried women. The classic fathers of the past generations have been interested in the education and culture of their daughters. There are found in many homes of North China



young women whose life is purposeful and helpful, and who have remained unmarried. It has been, therefore, not as difficult in Peking as in other cities to secure competent teachers from among Chinese ladies to take the head of girls' schools. Of these educated women, naturally the princesses of the "Manchu" dynasty were the leaders.

### **Educationally.**

Before there were any government schools in Peking several Manchu princesses had girls' schools under their patronage. These were in excellent order and doing good work. The word "Manchu" has almost disappeared from Chinese conversation and more completely have these girls' schools become a thing of the past. These were the real beginnings of women's education in the northern capital.

Peking has a large number of women of superior education and of broadened outlook, the wives of the high officials of the government. These women are in a small measure part of the society of the diplomatic corps and their return to their home provinces carries much influence among their own people.

In the Government Normal School, which typifies the most advanced education to-day, a young woman educated in America was employed as a teacher. Her training and real worth soon made her the most popular teacher in the school. Not only was she this, but she was successful in getting over forty young women students into a Bible class. Soon after there came a change of school superintendent and she was tendered "an indefinite leave of absence." She had been too successful.

For three years there has been on file with the National Committee of China a formal request from the Missionary Association of Peking for secretaries

to be provided at once for the capital. There have been at various times secretaries in Peking as students of the language, and the last year there was opened in Peking a secretarial home in which are Miss King and Miss Severin preparing for work in Peking, so soon as the strengthening of the situation in other cities in China makes feasible the opening of work in the city. There are two student branches in Peking; one in the Women's Union College with a membership of eighty, and one in the Methodist Girls' School.

## TIENTSIN.

While Peking as capital of China is of greatest importance, Tientsin is the key to that more widely known city—it is the birthplace of many of the reforms, revolutions and progressive measures that reach more slowly the conservative city of the rulers. It has no natural beauties to commend it; it is flat, almost treeless, windswept and dusty, chill from ocean winds, hot in summer and having a glorious autumn and winter climate. The people of Tientsin, while coming from many provinces, speak Mandarin, and work with the people has more coherence than in a city where the population is of many dialects. The race is a northern one—hardy, stern, dependable; not given to hilarity and contention. Beasts of burden and carts are employed in their business—agriculture, which occupies all the men who till, and the women who grind, in the vast level plain of the North. The food of the people is largely wheat and millet, with a few coarse vegetables and pork. The scarcity of water, the dust, the need of heavy clothing that is not so easily washed, make the laboring people of North China often less attractive in appearance than are the southern people.



"Two women shall be grinding at a mill, one taken and the other left."

### Provincial Education.

Government education for girls was first begun in Tientsin. The Girls' Normal School is the oldest of its type in China. The Normal in its beginning followed a unique plan—young women were brought from provinces of the south, expenses paid, all accessories provided, and a few dollars monthly allowed them on attainment of certain scholarship. Government kindergartens have gathered in the darlings of the gentry families, keen eyed, refined, alert children. The "public school," so-called, has many girls from better homes. Some industrial work is a common feature of all schools, showing a practical and sensible desire of the authorities to harmonize home avocations and education. Numbers of private or gentry schools have existed for consecutive years in Tientsin. Nearly all the schools have physical exercises in one form or another, often such as are suitable only for men and boys. Selected ethics are taught in schools. Classic

readers especially written and illustrated for girls are provided. These include topics of decorum, punctuality, respect for parents, proper attitude to men, etc.

## **THE YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION.**

### **Beginnings.**

Miss E. M. Saxelby began her study of the Mandarin language in Tientsin in 1910, taking up her residence there. She was invited to teach classes in physical work in two of the government girls' schools. This she did with heroic devotion and singleness of purpose. During the revolution of 1912 when all school work was abandoned, Miss Saxelby was called to help care for Mandarin-speaking refugees in Shanghai. While on a street car, one day, she unexpectedly met two Tientsin students and discovered that her students in physical education were enrolled and were drilling in the Women's Army of China! Calls followed and she organized some of them into a First Aid class; then, at the request of a few of them, made plans for a Bible class, which did not meet, as the young women were suddenly ordered to the front. But they went literally with "Studies in Mark" under their arms for the books reached them at the Shanghai-Nanking Railway Station. Peace came, and the young women returned to Tientsin, where Miss Saxelby soon organized a Bible class of over twenty of them, as well as giving intensive teaching to some of the more earnest.

### **Organization.**

Miss Paxson and Miss Taft were sent to Tientsin in the fall of 1912 to be associated with Miss Saxelby while they were doing half-time language study.

Through the courtesy of the London Missionary Society, a house was rented in the foreign settlement. Calls were made and social gatherings were held. The National Committee asked several ladies, Chinese and foreign, to serve as an Advisory Committee, and in the spring of 1913 organization was effected; the Advisory Committee disbanded; Miss Saxelby was made general secretary, and a charter membership of twenty-six was formed.



Student Association Methodist School.

At the meeting for organization a recognition service for the reception of the members was employed. The Chinese are highly appreciative of dignified forms of service. Within three months from the time of organization more than one hundred young women were enrolled in Bible classes. The membership had increased to eighty-one. The students enrolled in Bible classes were from the Woman's Law School, The Government Normal, the Government Hospital and Training School and from the British College. The growth during the entire year has been sub-

stantial. The total membership is now over one hundred women who have been carefully chosen. The ideal of work has been to instruct a small number of members carefully as to the ideals and possibilities of the Association and to add to the membership in ratio as a membership can thus be taught and trained for service. Every member of the Tientsin Association is a factor in its life. There are besides social work and Bible classes, groups in singing, sewing and clubs for the study of English.

### **The Present.**

In the summer of 1913 Miss Mayhew, National Director of Physical Education, visited Tientsin and Peking and presented her plan for the development of the physical life in the Association. She was cordially



Tientsin opposite Association Headquarters.

received by the authorities of the government schools and gave several demonstrations of the ideal to which she was working.

Miss Derry is at present in charge of the physical work in the Tientsin Association. Miss Pyke is giv-

ing half time to language study and half-time to the work of the Association, and Miss Saxelby will continue with the Association until July.

In the Methodist Girls' High School there is a student branch organized and instructed by Miss Taft. These young women are from the first homes of Tientsin and will go out to the places of highest womanhood in the great city.

Their committees and cabinet are keen on developing student work in the way they have heard it done in the United States. Already they have an extension work, various members giving their time to the telling of Bible stories in a private school whose pupils are too young to take up Bible study.

### **SUMMER CONFERENCES.**

It was only seven years ago that it was declared unadvisable and impossible to hold a separate conference for girl students. Last summer under the direction of Miss Paxson, now student secretary for China, there was gathered at the Temple of the Sleeping Buddha, in the western hills beyond the walls of Peking, a conference of eighty students, representing sixteen schools, nine denominations and eight provinces. Sixteen missionaries and secretaries were present as leaders of the conference. The gathering was financed entirely by the friends in North China. The messages to the conference were a call for a surrender of body, mind and spirit to Christ. There was definite response to the message, the new social life in China, making it possible for young women to have a voice in the ordering of their own future. It is safe to say that in North China the summer conference will become more and more a teacher of Association activity.



Some of the young women from the non-Christian schools are eager for summer camps and it lacks only workers to bring to pass what the Young Men's Christian Association has accomplished in North China, a conference wholly for students of government schools. It is impossible to over-estimate this form



Physical Training, Summer Conference.

of conference. The students from the government schools come with mature minds that are eager to understand the foundation, the tenets and the practices of the Christian religion. Their reading has included agnostic and rationalistic literature. A background of Western history and thought is often lack-



## THAT YOU MAY SHARE.

In February, 1914, Wellesley Alumnæ Association transferred its support to Miss Theresa Severin, who was graduated from Wellesley College in 1909. She then became their official representative on the field.

The ultimate purpose of the Wellesley interest in China focuses in Peking. It is the aim to make Peking a Wellesley station for Association work.

To do this there must be at least two secretaries in command of the language before Association work is possible in Peking.

The plan for the present year is as follows:

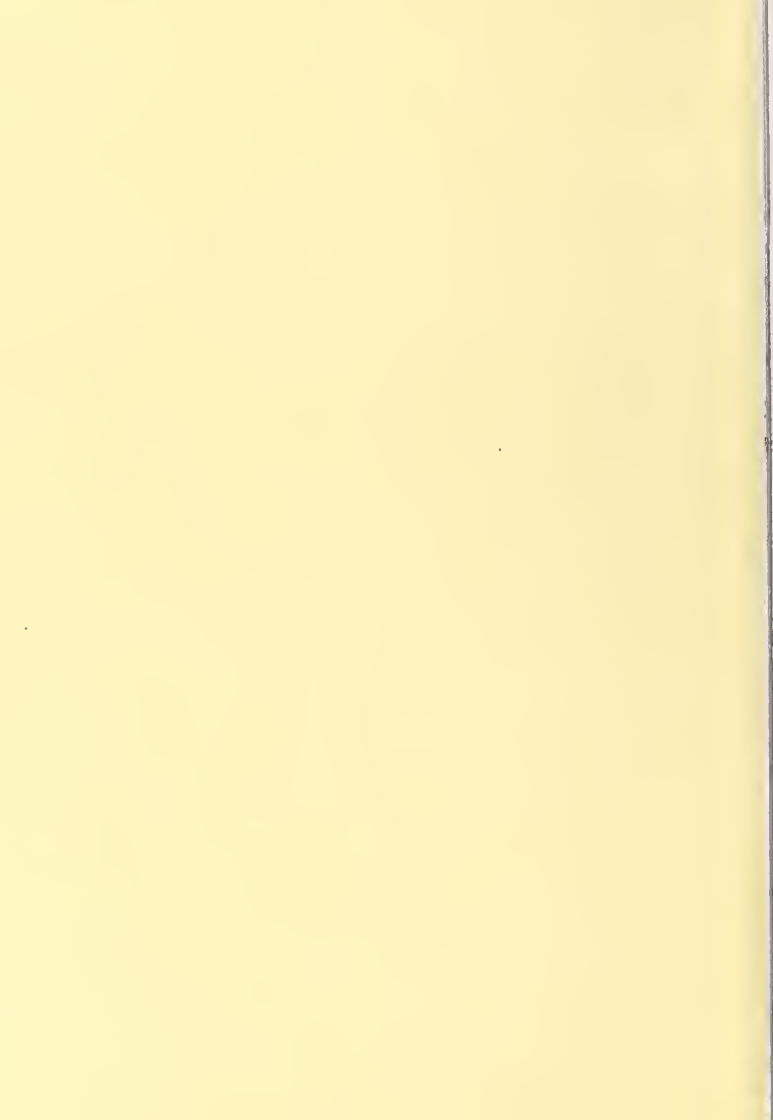
- a*—The support of Miss Severin, who is now in Peking at language study, \$1,100,
- b*—The support of a second Wellesley secretary at \$1,100 per year with the necessary expense of outfit and journey, \$500.
- c*—To continue the gift for the extension of the National work, increasing it in proportion to the number of secretaries to \$500.

### *Summary—*

Support of Miss Severin .....	\$1,100
Support of second Wellesley secretary .....	1,100
Expense of outfit and journey .....	500
Extension of National work .....	500

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\$3,200



ing. The conference affords an open field in which to meet honest inquiries and to present forcibly the claims of Christianity. The missionaries of North China are most willing to contribute of their experience and ability for this work.

### CONCLUSION.

As the seat of government, as the center of the foremost educational movement for women, and as the city of final authority for customs and practices, Peking is pre-eminently the most important city of China. It is no doubt well that the Young Women's Christian Association has been trying out its methods and studying its field in other parts of China, but there is no longer delay possible if the Association expects to occupy that place of influence in China now open to it. There must be workers for North China and especially in Peking. There is probably no city in the world where a Christian woman can make her influence for good more widely felt than in Peking at the present time. Chinese authorities, missionary groups, eager inquiring women, and the inarticulate cry of those needy ones who know not that Chinese women have come to a heritage, all invite the Association. Tientsin and Peking both are cities of more than a million population. Shall we take incentive from the indomitable courage of the builders of the great wall? Shall we draw inspiration from the Redeemer of all the earth? Shall we say "with God all things are possible," and possess the students of North China for Christ!

National Board of the  
Young Women's Christian Associations of the United States  
600 Lexington Avenue, New York  
1914